

Julia Loehden

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We came from Europe and landed in America in 1908/ I was about 4½ years old. Then we first live in Tigardville - its Tigard now - for a short time so that our parents could make room to pitch up a tent because the nursery -- they came to work in the nursery - it was advertised in Europe that they needed gardeners - so my parents and my uncles they were willing to come to America and then the nursery would sell them five acres and that's how we settled in Orenco and the first theing we lived in was a tent until enough space could be made for a house and the lumber. I really don't remember, but they cut down the trees and I don't know how they ever got the lumber there because the roads weren't even good for horses in places. We went to school in Orenco and we had to cross a creek and for quite a long time we had to walk over a log and I was scared stiff when the water would swell up in the winter time; nothing to hold on. I just got down on my fours and crawled and we walked to school on muddy roads. I don't know how they could ever clean the schools with all those muddy shoes in them. Well, we did enjoy the social life because the people couldn't go very far to socialize so everybody stayed in Orenco and there was a Presbyterian church there, we'd go there and they would have dinners and so on. We children were always the first ones to go - they would shoo us away many times and let the guest eat first but we wouldn't do that so they gave up on us and so we were served; I don't know how well they felt toward us but we didn't even know about emotions at that time.

Christmas time was so precious when we were small at that time my father wasn't able to work. He came to America a

a couple of years before we did and he invested in Canada and lost all the money and that just almost made him incapable of holding steady work in the nursery, so he didn't make much. So mother, being trained in Europe as a midwife, she was able to deliver babies and make money that way.

When we were small there wasn't enough money and it was about three days before Christmas and mother was weeping and she also prayed that the Lord somehow would provide enough money so she could buy some Christmas presents for us. So she knelt down and prayed and mentioned each one of our names so it was left like that and the night before Christmas, we heard jingle bells. The president of the Orenco Company, Mr. McDonald, he hitched up his horses, he had horses and cattle, and hitched them to a sled and he came and brought toys and also slipped mother a twenty dollar gold piece - in that days - oh - that was like \$300 today - and mother really gave God the glory. She says the Lord answered her prayer which He did and then mother went and bought flour and different things so she was able to make pastries then the night before Christmas. Mr. McDonald came again and brought along dolls and different things. We girls would look at the store there and we would just stay there for hours just looking at those beautiful dolls that we could never afford. So, on our first Christmas, we had them. And when we got up in the morning that was such a joy. We would go to church and there they would give everybody a little bag of candy and an orange and Santa Claus would come there and he really gave us much joy. It could have been an unhappy time, but because of the thoughtfulness of others. Oh, we'll never forget him. He lives in our memories

as a precious, wonderful person and he was a Christian and then we went to school in Orenco.

Q. How big was the town when you moved there?

I don't remember, but everybody knew planted those trees. We saw those trees planted and also different homes going up later on. We had our home built and it's still in Orenco. Which one is that? It's on Quagana Road. It's kinda a two-story on the corner going to Reedville. That was our house. We saw the church go up there that we remember.

Q. Was the President of the company Presbyterian? Yes.

So that's why the church is Presbyterian?

I don't know. He donated a whole lot of money to make the whole thing. School was very pleasant - we had 4-H, we raised chickens and a pretty garden - they would give us little plots close to the school and each one of us could plant whatever we wanted - I planted a mix - poppies and they were gorgeous. I won a prize. They were beautiful!

Q. What things did you do for entertainment - for fun?

They had a band. They had it right where the school is and we would hear and enjoy that. There wasn't much entertainment. We'd come to Hillsboro only on the Fourth of July and to have a hamburger. That was heavenly food for us - it tasted so delicious - we thought we were in heaven. A hamburger with a big slice of onion - and also weiners - that for any youngster is something else - and oh, it was so enjoyable - they had beautiful horses and they would ride them and all - they would have different rides.

Q. What did you usually have to eat?

We had Hungarian dishes like chicken paprika and chicken soup

and homemade noodles and cabbage rolls...and wonderful pastry. I don't know how mother could make that. She'd stretch the dough out - one lady - an English lady - came over when mother had the dough stretched out like tissue paper over a white damask table cloth, then my mother brought in the fruit that she was going to put on that pastry and she started putting butter first on and then the fruit and the lady said, "What are you doing to your tablecloth?" And then she began to roll it and then baked it and it was so delightful - such thin layers, wonderful -- but this lady thought - I guess she must have lost her marbles - she's putting butter and fruit on her tablecloth.

And then we'd go in the woods there and we'd kinda live next to nature. We would so enjoy makebelieve, the different things that would come across a child's mind. So we really didn't miss anything. We grew up healthy.

Q. How big a part did the company play, actually play in the town? Did everyone work for the company?

Yes. We were there when the Oregon Electric train came into existence. It was so wonderful to ride on a train. From Orengo to Hillsboro. That was great! And when we'd go to Portland, oh, we thought we went to the end of the world and to see all that water. The Willamette River, we lived in a place in Europe where there was no water, kind of a desert, but everything grew abundant and when we came on the boat to see all that water I just was getting so fed up with it when we came by the Rock of Gibraltar I told my mother I wanted to get off there. Let's get off here, I don't like that water. I was so scared, and the sailors, when we were coming into New York, they had to carry us because I'd just scream to see all that water there. They were so kind. They just

carried us. And before entering New York, I yelled out, "Mother, are we entering heaven?" And I kept saying that and she said, "Shush, this isn't heaven, this is America, why do you call it heaven?" and I said, "Well, I see an angel holding up a torch for us!" And they couldn't stop shush me because all that New York with all that electric light and that beautiful Statue of Liberty with a torch. I'll never forget that wonderful feeling that came over me that finally we were reaching heaven and then mother said, "My dear girl, this is not heaven yet, but later you will have tears here -- you'll be disappointed and perhaps you'll have a heart break. America isn't heaven yet, but if you love the Lord Jesus and serve him, you will embark someday and reach heaven and so that satisfied me!!!